TUNE

MOBILE PLANET

A BRAVE NEW WORLD FOR AFFILIATE PARTNERSHIPS

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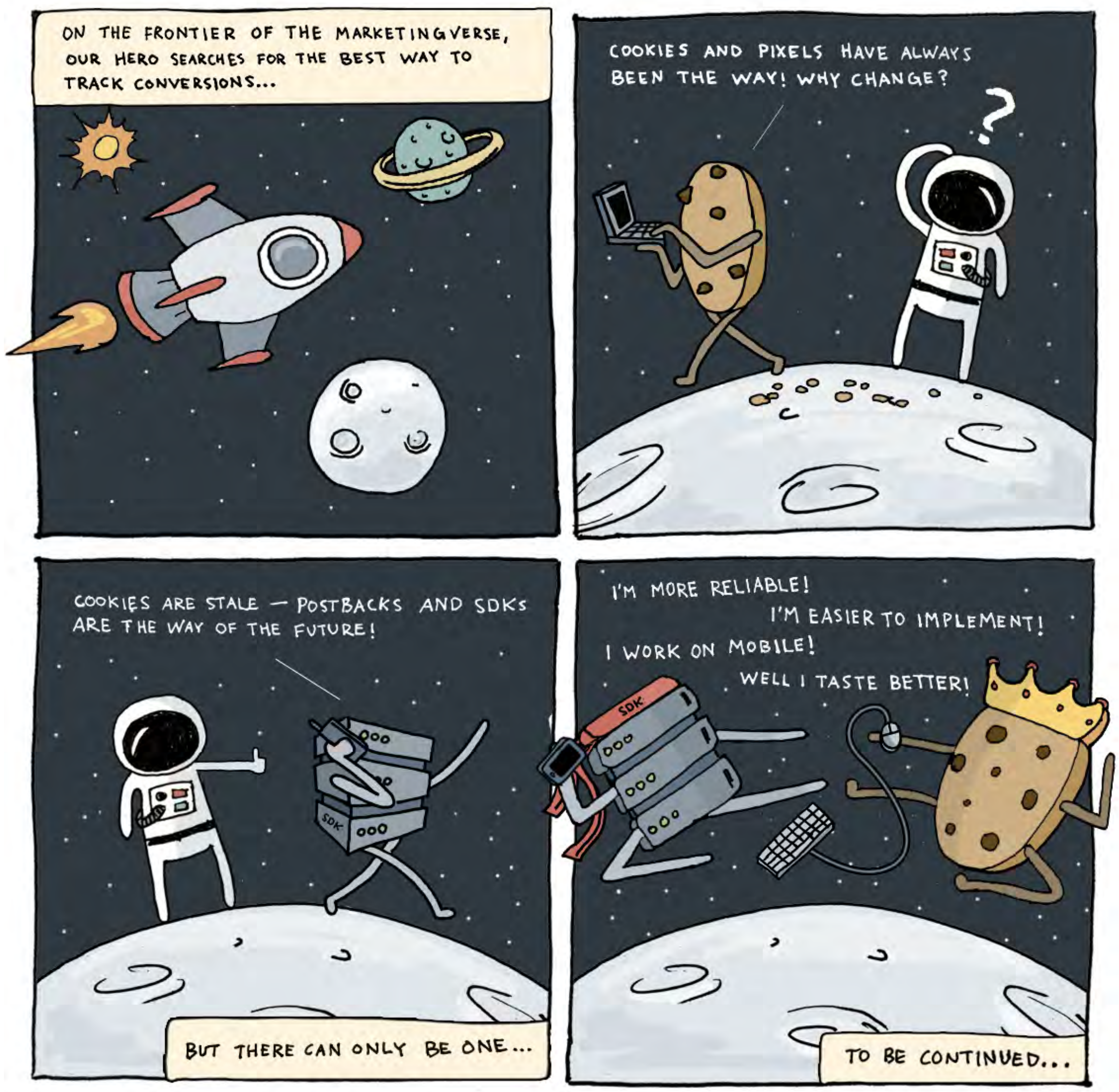
INTRODUCING

A Brave New World For Partnerships



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In the marketing universe, two types of partner marketers co-exist: **Traditional Desktoppers** and **Modern Mobilites**. While their goals are the same — "grow the customer base" — their tools and languages are quite different.

Traditional Desktoppers were born on the **web**, in the **affiliate marketing** era, using cost-per-sale and cost-per-action incentives. They depended on a combination of **cookies** and **pixels** to track their ad spend, and they lived this way for many years.

Conversely, the **Modern Mobilites** are **user acquisition** (UA) specialists focused on marketing in **app stores**, growth hacking to drive downloads, and using cost-per-install incentives. Through **software development kits** (SDKs) and **server-side tracking**, they focus on closing the gap with app stores to measure conversions.

This is not science fiction; today, there are partnership siloes that need to be re-examined. While a simple language barrier may be the root cause of these siloes, a technology barrier has become the sustaining force behind them.

> The fact is, we are now a mobile planet, and marketers must take proactive measures to equip themselves with the right tools and partners to navigate this strange, technology-driven world.

This resource is designed to help you do just that. In the following pages, we will explain why now is the time to turn on mobile partnerships, what the perceived barriers are to change, and how you can get your own mobile partner program off the ground.

EXPLORING NEW HORIZONS:

Why Mobile Partnerships, and Why Now?

Today is a new day for digital marketers. In the past five years, major changes have come to the worlds of advertising and mobile marketing.

- *Tracking methods* have advanced. Tracking platforms, measurement tools, and the ability to deterministically attribute traffic are eons better today than even a few years ago.
- *Mobile payments and mobile commerce* are commonplace. Where there is smoke, there is fire; mobile partners are ready to build the advertising supply that will light it.
- *Customer experiences are optimized across channels.* It is relatively seamless to jump from one app to another app, from the mobile web to a desktop site, or from an in-app ad to a mobile webpage.

In addition, a number of disruptions in the performance ecosystem have converged to create a true case for action. These include new technologies for running digital marketing campaigns, new types of performance-based partners, and new privacy restrictions that change the way marketers interact with consumers and the ads they see. If these were the only reasons for change, it'd be enough to stop there. But the data behind the movement is just as compelling.

Mapping the Way With Data

Every day, more consumers are choosing mobile as their channel of choice. This growing usage drives improvements in all of the areas mentioned above; those improvements, in turn, attract more consumers to mobile, which drives even more improvements ... you see where this is going.

And it's not just consumers and the mobile-first companies of the world — the Ubers and Instagrams — that are driving growth. Even traditional brands are driving it — the Disneys, Expedias, and Safeways. Apps convert 3X better than mobile web, making mobile affiliate a critical component of modern retail marketing strategy. What's more, new media opportunities like over-the-top (OTT) technology, voice assistants, and the internet of things (IoT) have more in common with mobile than they do with desktop web.

Thankfully, mobile measurement providers (MMPs) have already paved the way for brands looking to take advantage of mobile marketing. And a good thing, too, as companies are expected to spend $64 billion on mobile app install ads alone in 2020. (To put that in perspective today: $1 million was spent on app marketing in the time it's taken you to read this far.) And that number should only rise, given that digital advertising spend is predicted to hit $384 billion by 2020 and account for more than half of all advertising worldwide.

Yet the most practical sign that life has permanently changed in the mobile era is a shift in consumer behavior. Each year, more shoppers in the United States are showing a preference to shop via app, with millennials showing the strongest preference for app over web, 62% to 38%. Today, roughly 1 in 5 Americans are "smartphone-only" internet users: consumers who rely on a smartphone as their only means of internet access at home.

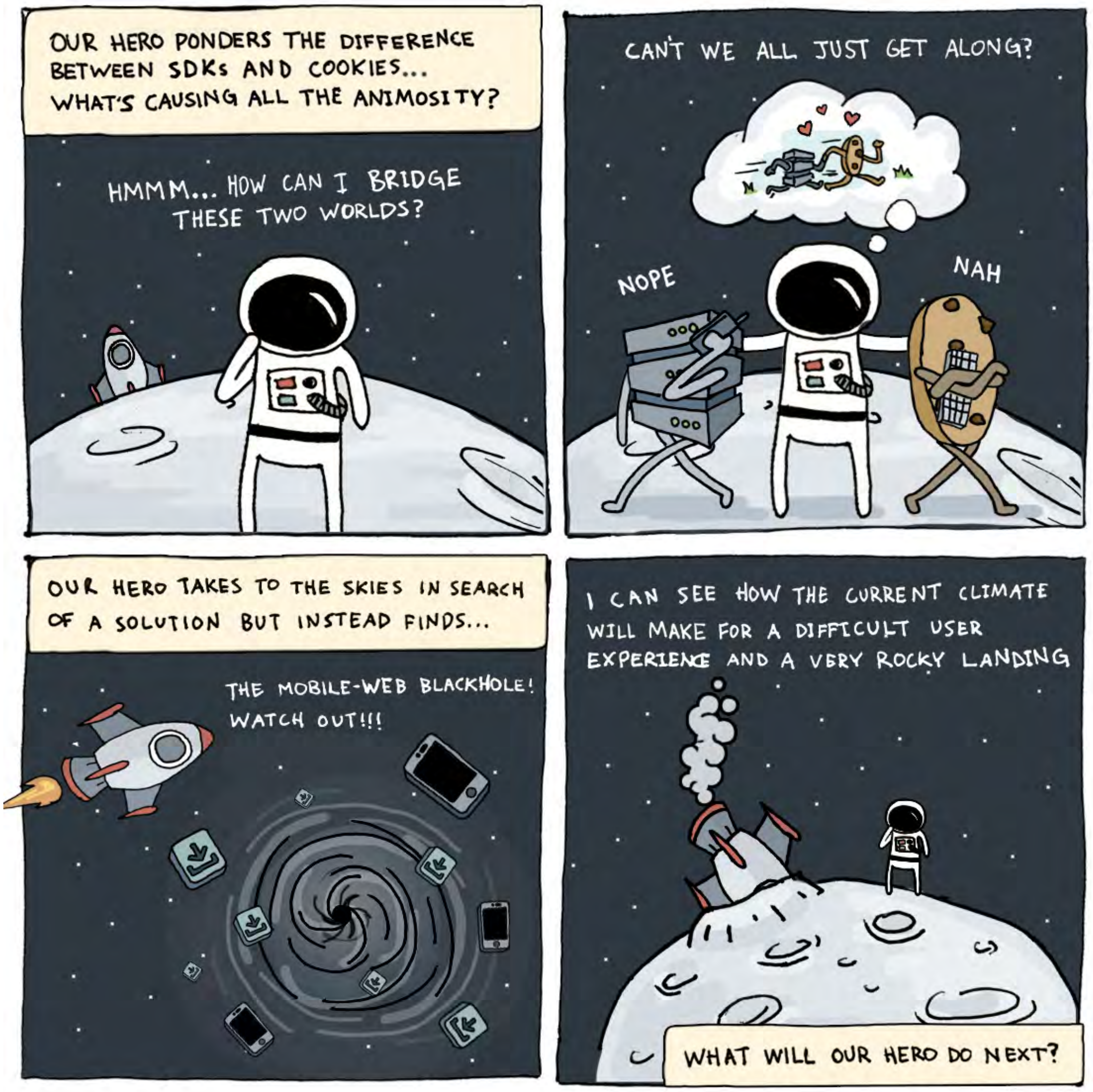
52% *Mobile internet traffic as share of total global online traffic.*	**65%** *Mobile share of total digital minutes in the US (2017)*	**87%** *App share of total mobile minutes in the US (2017)*	**21%** *Social media share of total mobile minutes in US (2017)*
Chrome *Most popular mobile browser as of August 2019*	**62%** *Share of global mobile video plays as of Q2 2018*	**64%** *Smartphone retail visits share as of Q1 2019*	**46%** *Smartphone retail orders share as of Q1 2019*

Mobile is driving significant changes in consumer behavior. Source: statista.com

With all of these factors and more converging in the digital ecosystem, it's time for marketers to merge affiliate marketing and user acquisition, bring desktop and mobile together, and build upon the best each side has to offer. So why haven't they?

NAVIGATING ROUGH TERRAIN

Barriers to Partnering Across Desktop and Mobile



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Unfortunately, there are **three barriers to change** that have stopped many Traditional Desktoppers and Modern Mobilites from joining forces:

1. **Organizational Walls**
2. **Tracking Links**
3. **User Experiences**

Each side perceives these barriers as obstacles at best, and deal-breakers at worst.

Barrier #1: Organizational Walls

Many companies founded before the rise of mobile have built an **organizational wall** that separates their online business from their mobile presence. These companies tack on mobile apps and mobile web as an afterthought, and they treat mobile as a separate entity and strategy — an offshoot from the core business and the marketing efforts for it.

Until recently, organizational structures did not take into account the idea that the organizing construct is not *channel*, but *growth*. Businesses that look at growth as the overarching goal tend to bring their mobile and desktop teams together to join forces. Companies that do not view growth in the same way tend to separate out the teams that build apps from those that drive desktop traffic.

This mentality must change so that cross-team collaboration between user acquisition and affiliate partnerships can take shape.

Barrier #2: The Links Stink

Over the years, online advertisers and app marketers have established two different sets of standards for tracking and attribution. With two tracking paradigms, **the links … well, stink**.

Why? There are black holes in every corner of the cross-channel universe. Black holes mean that partners who spent their hard-earned money on marketing on the brand's behalf are not getting properly compensated. As a result, a given brand's conversion rate starts to look pretty poor to those partners, and thus, they hold off on promoting the brand. That's a bad outcome no matter how you look at it.

Legacy desktop tracking is penalizing mobile affiliate marketers, as many Traditional Desktoppers do not believe it is feasible to properly attribute mobile traffic. And they're right — *if* they only use the desktop standards of the past. With the right technology and measurement partners, proper attribution on mobile is possible.

Barrier #3: The UX Sucks

By and large, affiliate marketing leaves much to be desired when it comes to transition experiences. (For example, sending a user from web to app, or desktop web to mobile web, or app to app.) Many transitions are less than ideal at best, and at worst, the **user experience (UX) sucks**.

Luckily, mobile measurement partners and smartphone software creators (e.g., Apple, Google) are aware of this problem, and they have a solution for it: intelligent routing. This solution involves two mobile-specific concepts:

- **Deep linking:** Deep linking lands a user in a specific location within an app or on a page of a website, as opposed to sending them to the app's home screen or the website's home page.
- **Apple Universal Links and Android App Links:** These links intelligently route a user to the optimal destination, depending on whether or not a user has the relevant app installed. For example, if you have the app on iOS, a Universal Link will land you on the right page within the app. If you do not have the app installed, the link will route you to a landing page on mobile web.

With a little tech-savviness, mobile experiences can provide the best of both worlds: a high-converting app route when an app is installed, and a mobile web flow to fall back on when it's not. And the best part? Attribution works deterministically for both.

Other Reservations About Mobile Partners

One very practical hurdle to working more closely with mobile partners is a lack of familiarity with who the players are or how to form relationships with mobile developers or mobile apps. Given the mobile form factor, brands have to think differently about the creative and content that work better in native contexts. Luckily, many of the same partners that work for traditional web also work for mobile.

The last issue is one that has been amplified by the headlines in the news: mobile ad fraud. Concern is warranted. However, much of this concern can be resolved through technology. The key to preventing mobile fraud is truly understanding the way it works within the mobile channel. Interestingly, mobile fraud is not that different than the kind of fraud found in the desktop ecosystem; in many cases, it's actually the same thing just with a different name.

The most relevant type of mobile ad fraud to guard against is attribution fraud. We can help you parse through this and other subjects on the TUNE Blog, where you can find articles on the types of mobile fraud, the impact of click fraud, and how to prevent mobile fraud.

Breaking Through

With solutions for each of these so-called barriers, nothing should stand in the way of marketers who want to combine forces across desktop and mobile. So let's take a look at how Traditional Desktoppers and Modern Mobilites can make their partnership stick.

CHARTING A COURSE

Key Steps For Smooth Partnerships

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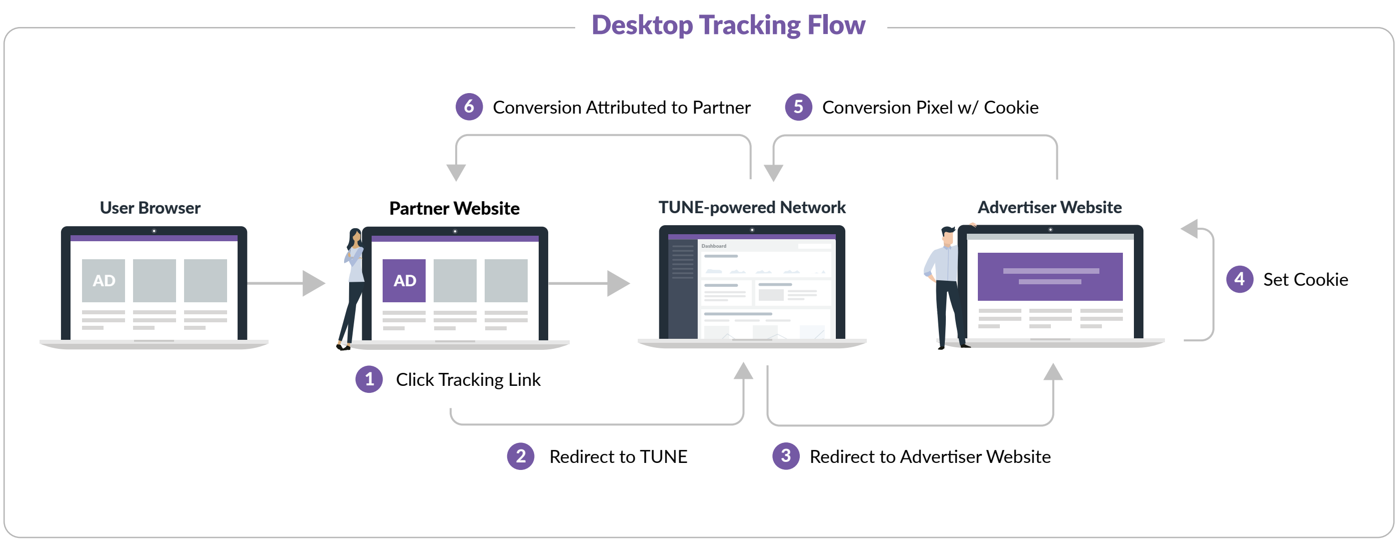
If you work with both desktop and mobile partners, bridging the gap between them may be one small step for your company. It will, however, be one *giant* leap for your partner marketing program and your ability to scale. So, how do you actually do it?

First, it's best to review the standard flow of a marketing conversion on desktop. Why? Because the marketing stuff you're used to on desktop (like cookies and pixels) have parallels on mobile. The better you understand one, the easier the other will become.

How Tracking Works on Desktop

On desktop web, tracking works like this:



Step 1: A user clicks on an ad discovered on a partner's (or affiliate or publisher's) website.

Step 2: The user is seamlessly redirected through the partner's network. In this case, let's assume it's a TUNE-powered network. The click (and associated data) is recorded.

Step 3: The network redirects the user to the advertiser's landing page.

Step 4: On the landing page, a cookie is dropped on the browser.

Step 5: An event (e.g., a purchase or sign-up) occurs and is recorded in the cookie, and a conversion pixel is fired back to the network to connect the original click to the conversion.

Step 6: In this case, as the only touchpoint, this event is attributed to the partner and the partner is notified.

Now, let's look at how it works in the mobile world.

How Tracking Works on Mobile

Cookies do not work well in mobile environments. In particular, cookies do not work at all with mobile apps; after Apple's latest Intelligent Tracking Prevention update, they are unreliable for mobile web tracking. Luckily, that's not a problem thanks to a useful bit of code called a software development kit (SDK).

To measure performance on mobile, apps and mobile websites install a measurement SDK that communicates click and tracking events via server-to-server communications. We call these communications "postbacks," as they communicate performance by posting the data back to a server. SDKs and postbacks mirror the behavior of cookies and pixels in the desktop world.

SDKs in apps and mobile websites enable accurate attribution by allowing the following:

- If the user is directed to a mobile app already installed on their device, the app SDK can see the inbound click and any data associated with it. The SDK can then connect every event that happens in the app back to the same click.
- If the user is directed to a mobile website on their device, the mobile web SDK can see the information on the inbound click, track it via cookieless local storage, and use this information to track future events on that mobile website back to the click.
- If the user is directed to a mobile app that is not installed on their device, the app SDK can see the install once the user has gone through the app install process. The SDK can then determine what part of the app the user meant to go to when they clicked the ad, and automatically redirect them to the right location. It can also determine what user clicked the ad, store this information, and connect every subsequent event that happens in the app right back to the click.

To enable these flows, SDKs make use of advertising identifiers and deferred deep linking. Every iOS and Google Play-enabled Android device has an advertiser ID, which is provided by the device's operating system. These IDs are unique to the device and user, and are a means to deterministically connect ad clicks in one mobile app to behavior in another.

Using advertiser IDs allows SDKs to deterministically match click to conversion, even if there's a trip to the app store in the middle. In that case, after deferring the user from an in-app destination to the app store, the SDK can *still* deep link the user to exactly the right spot as soon as the app is installed.

To sum up the similarities between tracking on desktop and mobile, remember this analogy:

> Cookies and pixels are to desktop web as SDKs, advertising IDs, and postbacks are to mobile apps.

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How Partnerships Pull It All Together

In the mobile world, specialized companies provide the software and attribution services needed to measure performance in apps and on mobile web. These companies are known as mobile measurement partners, or MMPs, and include Adjust, AppsFlyer, Branch, Kochava, and Singular. They track mobile events through their proprietary SDKs, which “sit on top” of the marketer’s app and/or mobile website, functioning similar to the way cookies and pixels do in browsers. MMPs stitch every event and touchpoint back to a singular customer identity, and some can easily do multi-channel attribution, too.

As MMPs provide the best tracking on mobile, they are also uniquely positioned to provide the optimal routing experiences for users as well. Much like ad networks in the desktop world, which redirect the user to the right landing page via a destination URL, mobile measurement partners are able to choose the correct place for a user to land depending on the context. For example, this could be sending a new user to download an app, deep linking a current app user to a landing page in an app, or sending a user with intent to purchase to a checkout page on mobile web.

How You Can Get Started

Unifying your desktop and mobile partnerships doesn’t have to be a daunting task. Just look at all the similarities these two worlds share, and remember these three things:

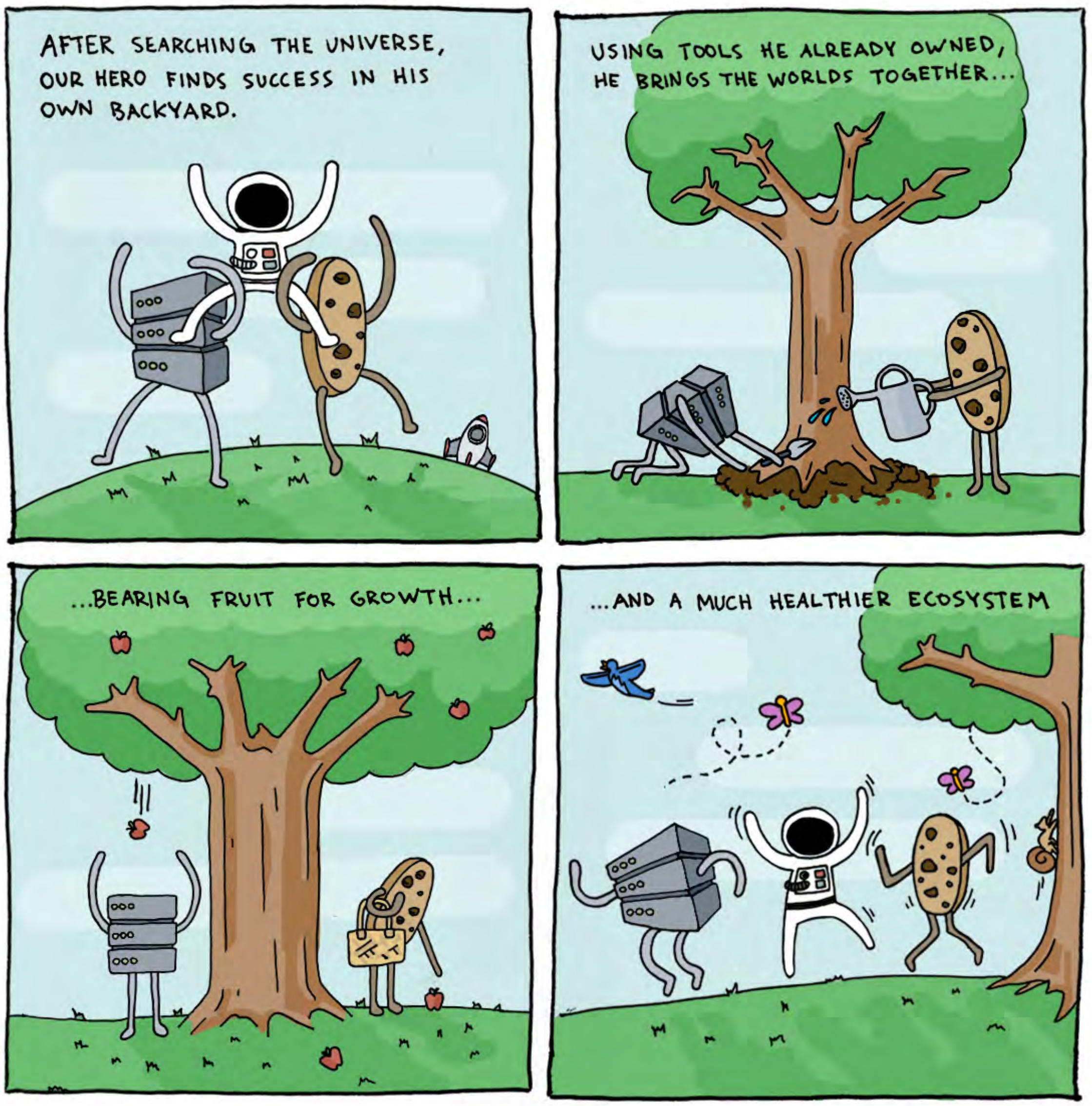
1. **You need to do this! *Seriously!*** Mobile partners are open for business.
2. **You can do this! *Seriously!*** Mobile measurement can work, without implementing additional SDKs in TUNE today.
3. **You can succeed at this because it’s the stuff you're used to.** Cookies and pixels have mobile analogues that make this imminently doable.

If your company measures mobile marketing with any of the mobile measurement partners listed above, you’re ready to start leveraging mobile partnerships through TUNE today. In a few steps, you can take your current partner program beyond **measuring** (attributing) mobile partners to **managing** (optimizing and paying) mobile partners. And if you still need to set up a partner program to bring together mobile and desktop partners, now you know it’s not only achievable — it can be easy, too.

Read on to discover the solution that powers cross-channel partnership programs right here on planet Earth.

RIGHT HERE, RIGHT NOW

How to Unearth Your Own Mobile Partnerships



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Turns out, the solution to unifying mobile and desktop partnerships has been sitting right in front of all of us, *right here* on planet Earth — and right under your own roof.

An Earthly Discovery

Located in the heart of the Pacific Northwest is TUNE, a partner marketing platform that integrates directly with mobile measurement partners. Innovators at TUNE have been leaders in mobile and performance marketing for over a decade; we even invented the technology and term behind "postback," the tracking standard on mobile. We know this world very well.

But we also know digital marketing — not just on apps and smartphones, but on desktop web, too. By specializing in the more complex realm of mobile attribution, we've also mastered tracking on desktop web. We know how both work, and how to make them work together. That means the TUNE Partner Marketing Platform can house *all* of your partnerships across desktop and mobile, route *all* of your users to the right place, track *all* of your campaign conversions and transactions, and finally, pay *all* of your partners.

All that *you* need to unify your mobile and desktop partnerships with TUNE is already sitting right in front of you — or, more precisely, in your app.

Most likely, your mobile app already has a software development kit from a mobile measurement partner installed. (Almost every app worth a darn has a mobile measurement SDK installed, since you can't measure much without one.) Thanks to the SDK that your MMP has already provided, you can use the TUNE Partner Marketing Platform to manage your mobile relationships the same way you manage your desktop-bound relationships.

In other words: If you've been searching the marketingverse for a way to future-proof your affiliate or partner program, or to scale with new types of partners like mobile ad networks and app creators, you can finally relax — you just discovered a solution in TUNE.

Our Recommendation for Successful Mobile Partnerships

TUNE has partnered with the industry's leading mobile measurement partners to ensure that you can turn all of your mobile networks into performance partnerships. Our best-in-class solution marries first-rate partner relationship management with superior mobile tracking and routing experiences, with as little engineering work as possible.

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- Provides the partner management and invoicing/payout capability.
- Already powers many of the top mobile-specific partners.

Mobile Measurement Partners

- Able to do “affiliate-grade” mobile attribution.
- Provide optimal mobile routing/funnel experiences.
- Already present in nearly every app, so our solution can be used right away.

In a universe of opportunity, why keep your world so small? With the right integrations, you can open the door to more mobile partnerships. Only then will you be able to join the rest of this mobile planet.

To find out more about TUNE’s mobile measurement partnerships and integrations, click here.
To get started with TUNE and open your universe of partnerships, click here.